

September 4, 1962

IN DRAFTING REPLY TO CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES

Following are a half-dozen common complaints about our letters to Members of Congress:

- Not getting to the main point that is disturbing the Member of Congress or constituent, but instead giving a partial or vague reply.
- Stilted language, or indications or expertise not shared by the incoming letter.
- Not expressing regret when a reply is long overdue.
- Failure to acknowledge that a Congressional letter was addressed to the Secretary.
- Ascribing views to the Assistant Secretary rather than the Department.
- No style, color or lasting imprint.

The best way to sum up what is being sought is this statement by Joseph Pulitzer for the guidance of his newspapers:

"I must see that my readers get the truth; but that is not enough. I must put it before them briefly so that they will read it, clearly so that they will understand it, forcibly so that they will appreciate it; picturesquely so that they will remember it, and, above all, accurately...."

Thanks very much.



Frederick G. Dutton  
Assistant Secretary for  
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State Dept. review completed